

CLAIM OR CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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5 1. A method of generating a normalized bitmap representation of the shape of a visual object in an image comprising the steps of:

segmenting the image to generate a segmentation map of visual objects;

identifying samples from the segmentation map belonging to a visual object of interest;

10 identifying the largest connected blob to form an un-normalized bitmap; and

normalizing the un-normalized bitmap to form the normalized bitmap representation.

15 2. The method as recited in claim 1 further comprising the step of searching a database of images, each image having associated visual objects with normalized bitmap representations, in response to a query specifying a desired normalized bitmap representation to identify a plurality of visual objects having normalized bitmap representations that closely match the desired normalized bitmap representation.

20 3. The method as recited in claim 1 wherein the normalizing step comprises the steps of:

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computing a principal direction for the un-normalized bitmap based upon the mean and covariance as eigenvectors of a covariance matrix; and

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5. The method as recited in claim 2 wherein the searching step comprises the steps of:

1. The first part of the paper is devoted to the study of the properties of the function $f(x)$ defined by the equation $f(x) = \int_0^x f(t) dt$. It is shown that $f(x)$ is a continuous function and that it satisfies the functional equation $f(x+y) = f(x) + f(y)$. The function $f(x)$ is also shown to be differentiable and its derivative is found to be $f'(x) = f(x)$.

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